

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A roof rack assembly for a vehicle comprising:
a plurality of rack elements movable between a stowed position where at least a portion of said rack elements are disposed below a plane defined by a roof surface, and a deployed position where said rack elements are spaced away from said plane.
2. The assembly as recited in claim 1, comprising a plurality of recesses within said roof surface for receiving said rack elements.
3. The assembly as recited in claim 2, wherein said recesses are formed as a continuous portion of said roof surface.
4. The assembly as recited in claim 3, wherein a portion of said recesses are disposed below said plane.
5. The assembly as recited in claim 3, wherein said rack elements are stowable at least partially within said recesses with a portion of said rack elements are disposed below said plane.
6. The assembly as recited in claim 3, wherein a portion of said rack elements comprise a portion of said roof surface.

7. The assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said rack elements comprise a generally oval shape.
8. The assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein said rack elements comprise lateral and longitudinal elements.
9. The assembly as recited in claim 1, comprising a drive for moving said rack elements between said stowed and deployed positions.

10. A roof module assembly for a vehicle comprising:
a roof surface that defines a plane and a plurality of recesses disposed below said plane;
and
a corresponding plurality of rack elements movable between a stowed position wherein said rack elements are at least partially received within said plurality of recesses and a deployed position spaced apart from said roof surface.
11. The assembly as recited in claim 10, wherein a portion of said rack elements are received within said recess and another portion is disposed at least partially above said plane.
12. The assembly as recited in claim 11, wherein said portion of said recess below said plane comprises an uninterrupted transition with said roof surface.
13. The assembly as recited in claim 10, wherein said rack elements form a portion of said surface of said roof assembly.
14. The assembly as recited in claim 10, wherein said rack elements comprise longitudinal and lateral members.
15. The assembly as recited in claim 10, comprising a drive for moving said rack elements between stowed and deployed positions.

16. The assembly as recited in claim 10, wherein said rack elements comprise an oval cross-section, and said recesses comprise a corresponding oval shape.

17. A roof rack assembly for a vehicle comprising:

a plurality of rack elements movable between a stowed position where at least a portion of said rack elements are disposed below a surface of a vehicle roof, and a deployed position where said rack elements are spaced apart from the surface of the vehicle roof; and

said rack elements comprising an oval cross-section.

18. The assembly as recited in claim 17, comprising an electric motor driving said rack elements between said stowed and deployed positions.

19. The assembly as recited in claim 17, wherein said rack elements provide a continuous surface corresponding with the vehicle roof when in said stowed position.